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Single Missions Organization

FMB, Spanish Baptists Set Joint Program In Guinea

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — In what was called a "real first," the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board approved a proposal Oct. 15 for Southern Baptist missionaries to join Spanish Baptist missionaries in beginning Baptist mission work in Equatorial Guinea.

The work in the small West African nation will not only mark the first time Southern Baptist missionaries and missionaries of another country have joined in a single mission organization, but will be the Spanish Baptist Union's first foreign mission venture.

John E. Mills, the Foreign Mission Board's director for West Africa, said the joint mission concept will help avoid charges sometimes made that missions are allied with colonialism and provincialism. Already Baptists

in Brazil have approached Spanish Baptists about the possibility of joining the new mission.

Baptists have an open invitation from the Guinean government, said Mills. He recently visited Pedro Bonet Such, president of the Spanish Baptist Union, and Maximo Garcia Ruiz, promoter-coordinator of evangelism and missions for the union, to draw up a working agreement. The two groups hope to have the first missionaries in place by Jan. 1.

Although missionaries will be joined in one mission organization, each will be responsible to and supported by his own sending agency. The two supporting bodies will share other expenses.

Spanish Baptists voted to undertake their first foreign mission work in their annual convention this summer after

seeing a slide presentation and report about Equatorial Guinea. Mary Simmons, Southern Baptist missionary press representative for Spain, said the people were so touched with needs and opportunities in Equatorial Guinea, that the more than 200 delegates gave a spontaneous love offering of \$15,000 to launch the missions effort. That was the largest single offering ever collected by Spanish Baptists.

The country was left impoverished by the 11-year rule of former president Nguema Biyoto Masie, who was deposed in August 1979. During his reign about a third of the population fled the country, another 50,000 were massacred, all churches were closed and annual cocoa exports dropped by nine-tenths, according to news reports.



MC Coliseum Is Meeting Site

The A. E. Wood Coliseum at Mississippi College in Clinton, is the site of two major Mississippi Baptist meetings in November and December. The state Brotherhood Rally will take place there on Nov. 10 and the state Youth Evangelism Conference will take place Dec. 29-30. Stories concerning these two meetings are in this issue.

Convention Will Decide Fate Of Clarke College

By Don McGregor

The Mississippi Baptist Convention faces a decision on Clarke College during its session Nov. 11 to 13.

The Board of Trustees of Clarke College will recommend to the convention that "we merge with one of our sister institutions, namely Mississippi College." Last week the Mississippi Baptist Christian Education Commission took action "that we concur with the trustees of Clarke College and that we accept their recommendation that Clarke College be merged with Mississippi College."

In the meantime the Mississippi College Board of Trustees met to consider the matter informally. The Mississippi College trustees will not give formal consideration to the matter until after the convention has taken action. In their informal consideration the trustees expressed support for the merger and authorized the administration to move toward the culmination of the merger and to obtain the facts and figures that would be necessary to give final consideration to the merger.

In presenting their recommendation to the Christian Education Commission, which is a constitutional requirement for convention consideration, the Clarke trustees cited several reasons which caused them to reach the decision to recommend a merger. They included the unhealthy financial condition which includes "an unfair scale of salaries" for administration and faculty; the present adequate condition of buildings and grounds but noting that they will not meet future needs of the students; and the tremendous competition from neighboring junior colleges, which include an

almost free education, which "necessitates the need for Clarke College to become a four-year institute." (Continued on page 2)

Home Board Approves '81 Budget, Votes Support Of Urban Center

By Marv Knox

ATLANTA (BP) — Southern Baptist Home Mission Board directors changed titles of the board's officers and top staff members, voted to support a broad-based Urban Church Studies Center and approved program goals for the coming year.

Directors also approved a \$36.6 million budget for 1981.

The actions occurred during the board's fall meeting, when directors also created two new staff positions to emphasize direct evangelism and named a director of missionary personnel.

The switch changed title of the executive director-treasurer, the board's top administrator, to president and chief financial officer. The associate executive director-treasurer was titled associate to the president. Directors of the board's four sections were renamed vice presidents for their respective sections.

The move also caused the president of the board of directors to be renamed chairman of the board. First and second vice president titles were changed to first and second vice chairmen. The recording secretary was titled secretary of the board, and the assistant re-

cording secretary was named assistant secretary of the board.

"Other Southern Baptist Convention agencies have made similar moves" with titles of their officers and administrators, said Howard Cockrum of Knoxville, Tenn., who became chairman rather than president. He said it was to make titles reflect the common conceptions of job responsibilities.

In other action, the board joined four SBC agencies and the six SBC seminaries in supporting the Center for Urban Church Studies.

The center will be planned to enable Southern Baptists to more effectively reach people for Christ and bring them into churches, according to a report

proposing the venture, presented by director Frank Holladay of Carrollton, Ga.

The center will be managed by a governing board of representatives from the agencies and the seminaries and operated by a director hired by the governing board.

It will conduct studies of urban areas around the world and provide data useful in program development. It also will initiate and assist in applied research, serve as a repository for information and provide consultation and training for staffs of SBC agencies and institutions.

"We're losing ground in our urban (Continued on page 3)

Some Believe There's A Difference

VERO BEACH, Fla. (EP via RNS) — A new city ordinance here has lumped crosses in the same category as the golden arches atop McDonald's hamburger restaurants. But outraged clergy have secured a promise from city officials to review the law.

The ordinance, says all rooftop signs must come down by the end of 1982. It applies equally to both the McDonald's sign and the cross atop First Baptist Church here. The law was passed in 1977, but the city only recently included crosses and signs in the offending classification, said building department director Ester Rymer.

Choctaw Chicago Trek Begins Indian Work There

By Tim Nicholas

In a Ford pickup with a camper top, a group of Choctaw Indians from Mississippi traveled 16 hours to Chicago, Ill., for a mission work trip.

This summer, the week of July 20, the group of volunteers, members of churches in New Choctaw Association, worked in Vacation Bible School, led Bible studies, worship services, and visited in the Indian community of Chicago.

They went to Chicago at the invitation of a former member of the Mississippi Choctaw community, Mrs. Jeff (Bernice) Chitto. She had talked with Home Mission Board consultant for Indian work, Russell Begaye, who contacted Missionary Dolton Haggan in Philadelphia, Miss.

Haggan handed the project over to local leaders and Arthur Ben, pastor of Pine Bluff Baptist Church, organized the group which included his wife Mary, and four other adult women and his son's family.

They stayed in a vacant parsonage, holding services in the American Indian Center. Vacation Bible School was in late afternoons in a corner of the center. "Loud," said volunteer Elizabeth Isaac, an instructional aide in the dormitory at Choctaw Central High School. The volunteers had to round up the children — no advance notices were posted, and the children

were unaccustomed to church-type services.

"I've heard about wild Indians," said Mrs. Isaac. "I never saw one till I got there." She added that few of the children in her class of four and five year olds knew anything about the Bible.

Arthur Ben taught an adult VBS class and then preached in the evenings at the Center. He decided to offer Bible study after the services and, beginning at 9:30 or 10 p.m., began Bible studies with 25-30 adults attending. As many as 68 attended the services.

The group visited in the park, inviting Indians to services and went to the American Indian Drop In Center. There they ate with Indians, inviting them to services.

Ben said estimates of the Indian population in Chicago ranges upward of 20,000. Mississippi Choctaws number 5,000. Many, Ben says, feel that there are culture barriers keeping them out of Anglo churches and have found no Indian Services in Chicago.

Now the Mississippi volunteer left a small organized Sunday School, which is meeting regularly at the Indian Center. Though pastorless, the group hopes for growth.

Ben is returning in November to the Chicago work to lead revival services and lead in Bible study. It will be vaca-

(Continued on page 3)



At left in front seat is Bernice Chitto, who, with her husband, began the process that resulted in the Mississippi Choctaw group taking the mission trip to Chicago. At right is Mary Dan. And in the back seat, center, is volunteer Clara Bell. In Mrs. Dan's lap is her granddaughter, Renata Ben. Others are Chicago area Indians.

Troubled Ministers And Troubled Churches

By Clifton Perkins, Director

Department of Church-Minister Relations & Annuity. I am sure you have heard the expression "the woods are full of them." Today the "woods are full" of troubled ministers and troubled churches.

After finishing a telephone conversation with a depressed pastor who told me of his dismissal by the church, I began to think how many times I had heard a similar story in the last few months. I began to count — one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty. Yes, I could count thirty ministers who had to leave their churches. And there are probably others whose situations I have not heard about. In addition to those who have resigned or been dismissed, there are others who are under heavy pressure.

Why all of this trouble? What can be done about it? Where do we start?

There are certainly many reasons for the many troubled churches and ministers of our day. Dr. William E. Hull

wisely writes, "conflict has always been a part of the Christian faith. The apostolic church was full of it, especially in the ministries of its two chief figures — Jesus and Paul. Almost every book in the New Testament was written to deal with discord promoted either from within or without." Space will not permit me to even list all the causes of trouble in church-minister relations today.

I think that the spirit in which we face a troubled situation is far more important than the cause. If we face the situation in a right spirit and attitude we will be far more likely to find the particular cause and make corrections. Indeed there may be times when the best answer for all concerned is to break the relationship. But in the face of these troubled situations there are some things that should be kept in mind.

First, a minister cannot apply for another position. At this point in Baptist life a minister cannot apply for a position and expect to be successful in securing it. So far as I have been able to determine, the minister is the only employed person who cannot apply for a position and expect to be successful in getting it. In other areas an unemployed person can consult the "help wanted" ads and

apply for another position, but not so with the minister. He must wait for the normal process in Baptist life to bring him into contact with a seeking church.

Another thing that should be remembered is that a minister is more likely to be called to another position if he is in a church than if he is not serving one at the present time. The fact that he is not serving a church might diminish his attractiveness to search committees. Unless somebody explains the situation to their satisfaction they may pass him by.

All of this adds up to one simple fact. When the minister-church relationship must be broken, the minister needs time for the normal processes to bring him into contact with another church. How much time — 60 days, 90? Yes, and maybe even more. In the Southern Baptist Convention, it has been observed that normally when a minister decides he needs to move, it usually takes six to eight months before he is in another church. Of course, there are exceptions to this.

In these difficult situations we must all, ministers and congregations, keep in mind the fact that Jesus says, "You are the light of the world (Matthew 5: 14)." When Paul was

writing to his friends in Philippi and thinking of their trying to live the Christian life in a heathen and pagan city, he said to them, "You shine as lights in the world (Philippians 2: 15)."

One of the main purposes of light is to guide and make things clear for people. As individual Christians and as churches we are to guide people in the ways of God. The ideals of the Kingdom of God should be made real in a local community through the life of the church. In the group life of Christian people, secular organizations should be able to discern the principles of conduct which should guide them. It is the plan of God that the Spirit of Christ which prevails in the church should invade the community, and not vice versa.

Both churches and ministers should face this possibility: It could be that the most powerful sermon that will ever be proclaimed from our church may be the message people get from the way we deal with troubled situations.

If we face these troubled relationship problems, remembering that Jesus says, "You are the light of the world," we are more likely to find the causes of our problems and be able to set things right.

1980 Mississippi Baptist Convention

(Continued from page 1)

Tuesday Evening "and SEEK my face"

6:50 Musical Praise	Instrumentalist
7:00 Call to Worship	
Congregational Praise	John Laughlin
Scripture	Marty Perkins
Prayer	Curtis Williams
7:10 Message in Song	John and Kathy McNair
7:15 Bible Treasure	Charles Whitten
7:30 Recognition of Missionaries	
Home	Carl Savell
Foreign	W. W. Walley
7:35 "My Most Memorable Witnessing Experience"	Manuel Weeks
7:40 Message in Song	Mississippi Singing Churchmen
	Dan Hall, Director
7:55 State Convention Program	Earl Kelly
8:55 Benediction	Anthony Kay

RECEPTION HONORING OUR MISSIONARIES, BAPTIST BUILDING

Wednesday Morning

"and TURN from their wicked ways"

6:50 Musical Praise	Instrumentalist
9:00 Call to Worship	
Congregational Praise	James Beasley
Scripture	Jack Gregory
Prayer	Cecil Braswell
9:10 Message in Song	Larry and Sandi Black
9:20 Bible Treasure	Jim Keith
9:35 Report of Committees	
Nominations	James Scirratt
Time, Place, Preacher	Robert Self
9:45 Election of Convention Officers	
First Vice-president	
Second Vice-president	
Recording Secretary	
Associate Recording Secretary	
9:55 Bold Growing	Dan Hall, Coordinator
10:05 Congregational Praise	James Beasley
10:10 Message	Lester Collins
10:40 Business Session	
Report of Convention Board	Brooks Wester
Adoption of Budget	John Causey
Report of Resolutions Committee	David Pratt
11:00 "My Most Memorable Witnessing Experience"	Carl Savell
11:05 Message in Song	Mississippi College Choir
	Jack Lyall, Director
11:15 Sermon	Keith Parks
11:45 Benediction	Harold Jordan

Wednesday Afternoon

"I WILL . . . HEAR from heaven"

1:50 Musical Praise	Instrumentalist
2:00 Call to Worship	
Congregational Praise	Bill Barnes
Scripture	James Hefflin
Prayer	J. G. Winscott
2:10 Bible Treasure	Wayne Burkes
2:25 Message in Song	Bob H. Jones
2:35 Sermon	Darold Morgan
3:05 Congregational Praise	
3:10 "My Most Memorable Witnessing Experience"	Tim Glaze
3:15 EDUCATION COMMISSION REPORT	Billy Thames, Chairman

Wednesday Night

"and will FORGIVE their sins"

6:50 Musical Praise	Instrumentalist
7:00 Call to Worship	
Congregational Praise	Leon Bedsole
Scripture	Gerald Buckley
Prayer	Robert Harvey
7:10 Bible Treasure	Howard Taylor
7:25 Congregational Praise	Leon Bedsole
7:30 "My Most Memorable Witnessing Experience"	Billy Doyle
7:35 Convention in Worship	
Chancel Choir	First Baptist Church, Biloxi
Convention Sermon	Frank Gunn
8:20 Benediction	Sue Tatum

Thursday Morning

"and will HEAL their lands."

8:50 Musical Praise	Instrumentalist
9:00 Call to Worship	
Congregational Praise	Ronnie C. McCall
Scripture	W. A. Fordham
Prayer	Guy Culver
9:10 Message in Song	Lewis Oswalt
9:20 Bible Treasure	Larry Kennedy
9:35 Miscellaneous Business and Reports	
Baptist Record Advisory Committee	Lewis Sewell
Board of Ministerial Education	James McEmore
Memorial Service	Cliff Perkins
9:55 Congregational Praise	Ronnie C. McCall
10:00 Message	Ted Ward
10:45 Bold Going	Marjean Patterson, Coordinator
11:00 "My Most Memorable Witnessing Experience"	Ed R. Willis
11:05 Message in Song	The "Singers"
	Blue Mountain College
11:15 Sermon	Nancy E. Robertson, Director
11:45 Benediction	Morris Chapman
Adjourn	Hugh Poole

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Bill Causey

Good News, Bad News About SBC Housing

LOS ANGELES (BP) — About 550 persons will receive good news from the Los Angeles Convention Bureau within a few weeks, but another 150 will get a bit of bad news.

The convention bureau opened the first day's requests for housing and assigned rooms to some 550 persons. The requests completely filled five hotels and nearly filled a sixth.

The first assignments were to smaller, more inexpensive hotels within easy walking distance of the convention center where the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention will be held in June.

"The Los Angeles Convention Bureau will be sending cards to those who submitted their request forms Oct. 1, within the next eight weeks," said Tim Hedquist, who handles convention arrangements for the SBC Executive Committee.

"The cards will specify the hotel assignment, in most cases one of the ones the person requested."

Hedquist said the hotels already filled are the Holiday Inn Downtown, Holiday Inn Convention Center, Gala Motor Inn, Kent Inn and the Figueroa Hotel. Most of the rooms in the Mayflower Hotel also are filled.

The convention bureau and Hedquist

had some bad news for about 150 other persons. They will be getting their housing request forms back and will have to go through the whole process all over again.

"They jumped the gun," Hedquist said. "They did not pay attention to the information which specified the requests must not be sent in before Oct. 1. Those with earlier postmarks were sent back."

He added: "The convention bureau is doing the room assignment in the fairest manner I have ever seen. They waited until Oct. 8 to open the requests, to make sure all of those postmarked Oct. 1 had arrived. They did not consider those with earlier postmarks, and returned them."

"They did it entirely by postmark. Therefore, no one could receive unfair advantage by sending the cards in earlier."

Hedquist said requests currently are being received at the rate of "100 or so a day" but added "plenty of rooms are still available for the convention."

Request forms are available in the September issue of *Baptist Program*, or from the Executive Committee. Persons needing additional information are asked to call Hedquist at the Executive Committee in Nashville rather than the LACB.



Program personalities at the 1980 BYW Retreat, October 10-11 were (left to right) Charlotte McMinn, Bible study leader; Marilyn Hopkins, BYW Consultant; Rachel DuBard, foreign missionary, Monrovia, Liberia; Mrs. Phil (Marty) Odom, music.



Slayden BYW presented the International Fashion Design Style Show on enlistment at the BYW Retreat. From left to right the models are: Nellie Hurdle; Kathy Crawford; Marty Allen; Deborah Sanders; Kitty King; Gae Lyn Anderson; Deana Hunsucker.

110 At BYW Retreat Hear Rachel DuBard

Baptist Young Women . . . 110 strong from 35 churches, came from across the state for their annual retreat in Clinton, to hear foreign missionary Rachel DuBard from Monrovia, Liberia; and Bible study leader, Charlotte McMinn from Clinton.

The Friday evening and Saturday retreat sessions were held at Camp Garaywa. With the theme, "Making Bold Choices," the BYW were challenged to make life-changing commitments in order to support world missions, by praying, going, and giving.

The new spiritual development book for BYW, "Surprise! Gifts For you," was introduced Friday evening by Mrs. Alan (Marilyn) Griffin of Laurel.

State BYW Representatives on the Mississippi WMU Executive Board, Mrs. Kenneth (Elaine) Rhodes, Poplarville, and Mrs. Elton (Linda) Whit-

ley, Tupelo, led special BYW method conferences, along with Mrs. Griffin. All three young women serve as associational BYW directors.

Miss DuBard, a Mississippian living in Carrollton, shared about "bold choices in life," as the Lord led her to missionary service after teaching school for a number of years. "Bold Choices in Liberia," Rachel told of her responsibility as business teacher at the Ricks Institute and her work in the local churches. Ricks is a Baptist school for elementary and secondary boarding students.

Charlotte McMinn led the Bible study presentation each session on "Designs for Discipleship." Using the text, Luke 9:23, "If any man will come after me, let him 'deny himself' . . . 'take up his cross daily' . . . 'and follow Me'."

The music was led by Mrs. Phil (Marty) Odom of Coldwater. Several BYW associational directors and local church presidents, shared on the program with the get acquainted time and presentation of the calendar of prayer.

The new BYW International Fashion Design Style Show was presented Saturday morning by the Baptist Young Women from the Slayden Church in Marshall Association.

The BYW Retreat for 1981 is NOW being planned. The date is October



Talmadge Butler (left) of New Orleans shows children's music material used in the workshop at West Jackson Street Baptist Church to (left to right) David Prevost, director of music and education, First Baptist Church, Canton; Rick Forbus and Ellen Hawkins, minister of music and pianist, West Jackson Street; and Kathy Pigott, organist, First Baptist Church, Greenville. (Phyllis Harper Photo)

West Jackson, Tupelo, Holds Music Workshop

West Jackson Street Baptist Church, Tupelo, recently held a workshop in children's music attended by church musicians and ministers of music in the north part of the state.

Conducted by Talmadge Butler of New Orleans, La., the workshop registered 140 participants for the Friday-night/Saturday morning sessions, said Rick Forbus, West Jackson street minister of music.

Butler, a professor at New Orleans

Theological Seminary, is author of numerous children's books and records, and is former editor of the children's division of the Baptist Sunday School Board. He has been featured speaker for the Music Educator's National Conference.

The workshop was conducted to "train children musically and spiritually," said Butler, using methods he has developed through the years; and based on current trends in music.

Convention Will Decide

(Continued from page 1)

In an informal discussion following the meeting of the Christian Education Commission, Lewis Nobles, president of Mississippi College, said, "On the culmination of this merger it is anticipated that appropriate upper division courses, contingent on demand, will be offered. In addition the Clarke campus may well serve as an extension center for graduate level work in various academic areas for those who are interested and are in the geographic area served by Clarke."

The Clarke trustees noted that requirements for an effort to continue to operate Clarke College independently would include additional support from the Mississippi Baptist Convention, additional support from local people and surrounding counties, a continued struggle and sacrifice on the part of the faculty and administration, and a financial base of endowments which is not available.

There was no suggestion from the Clarke trustees that the college cease operation. Such a step, the trustees said, would result in bad publicity for the convention and Baptist work in general and the cause of Christ throughout the area; a problem in the disposal of the property; the loss of jobs by the faculty and staff; the danger of hurting the students academically; and disappointment on the part of so many who have given much in time, effort, and money to have a Christian educational institution in that location.

In July of 1979 the Clarke trustees and the Education Commission in a joint meeting agreed to recommend to the convention last year that the Southern Baptist Education Commission be asked to study the Clarke College situation and report back to both the trustees and the Education Commission. Both the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and the convention itself approved this recommendation.

On July 28 the SBC Education Commission presented its 68-page report at a joint meeting of the two groups held on the Clarke College campus. In its section titled Conclusions and Possible Options the commission pointed out that any decision concerning the fu-

ture of Clarke College must be left to the trustees. This section discussed the need for a definite purpose, the incomes needed to operate such a college adequately, the number of students needed to be a major source of such income, the student-teacher ratio, and curriculum. Among the options mentioned was "consortium arrangements whereby agreements are made with another institution relative to the offering of courses and credit." The report pointed out that "in circumstances where ties already exist by reason of identity or relationship with a sponsoring or assisting body, such relationships could be more easily established."

The report noted that arrangements could be made for automatic acceptance for third-year students of the junior college at a four-year institution, an exchange of students between the two campuses; the offering of third and four year courses on the junior college campus in some instances, and an adjunct faculty relationship.

While no definite time-table was established, it was assumed that Clarke would continue to operate as it is for the remainder of this school year, and Mississippi College would take over the operation with the summer session. The details of the merger, of course, would depend to a great extent on decisions of the Mississippi College trustees.

It was noted that faculty contracts would be protected, and the merger would not cause problems for the students at Clarke.

Earlier this year the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Executive Committee guaranteed the operation of the school for the remainder of the 1980-81 school year.

The Clarke trustees noted that enrollment at the junior college is up for this year as compared with last year. The student body numbers in excess of 200 at this time. The trustees said they suggested Mississippi College for the merger because of the easier access on Interstate 20, because Blue Mountain is much farther away, and because William Carey already is operating facilities away from its main campus in Hattiesburg.

PASTOR/ NEW CHURCH TRAINING

Van Winkle Will Sponsor Growth Meeting

Van Winkle Baptist Church.

Men Will Discuss Merits Of A National Fellowship

MEMPHIS — About 200 Southern Baptist laymen and pastors will meet at the Hyatt Regency Hotel here October 31-November 1 to discuss the merits of a national fellowship of Southern Baptist men.

James H. Smith, executive director of the Brotherhood Commission, called the meeting following an expression of interest in an national fellowship by laymen attending 10 regional conferences.

The Commission conducted the conferences in 10 metropolitan areas throughout the United States in April and May to learn ways concerned laymen wanted to become involved in Bold Mission Thrust, the Southern Baptist plan for making the gospel available to every person in the world by the year 2000.

Smith said the need for a national fellowship was voiced in every regional conference. The meetings attracted more than 250 laymen who paid the travel and living expenses for the opportunity to participate.

The conferences were requested by the Southern Baptist Executive Committee after a delegation of concerned laymen expressed an interest in making their talents available to the denomination in behalf of Bold Mission Thrust.

Smith reported on the results of the conferences to the Executive Committee in Nashville Sept. 23 and the group asked his agency to assume leadership in involving Baptist men in the bold missions movement.

The invitation to attend the Mem-

phis exploratory conference at their own expense went to the 400 laymen invited to the regional conference, Smith said.

About 30 Southern Baptist pastors from the Memphis area also were invited and asked to bring two of their outstanding laymen with them, Smith said.

Amplifying on the meeting, Smith said "one thing that surfaced in every regional conference was the subject of creating a national fellowship of Baptist men."

"Already there is a fellowship of

Baptist doctors and dentists. Men in other vocations have expressed the desire for a similar fellowship. The purpose of these fellowships is to involve the vocational skills of Baptist men in meaningful ministries."

Since Smith took the reins of the Commission a year ago, he emphasized a greater involvement of Baptist men in missions.

One of his most recent accomplishments was the development of a new agency objective which calls for "helping churches involve Baptist men and boys in missions."

Youth Evangelism Meeting To Offer Christian Concerts

Musician David Meece and Andrus Blackwood and Company will offer Christian concerts during the annual

Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference, Dec. 29-30 at the A. E. Wood Coliseum at Mississippi College in Clinton.

The statewide program begins with registration at 1 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 29, and concludes at 4:30 p.m. the following day.



Meece

The Andrus, Blackwood and Company concert will be during the Monday afternoon session. David Meece will perform for two sessions on Tuesday.

Principal speakers will be Jack Stanton, Barry Landrum, and Frank Case. Stanton is director of the institute of evangelism and professor of evangelism at Southwest Baptist College, Bolivar, Mo. Landrum is pastor of First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La., and former pastor of First Baptist Church, Greenville, Miss. And Case is pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Tempe, Ariz.

Bruce Fields, minister of youth at First Church, Canton, will lead congregational singing.

Each church sending groups will be responsible for making reservations at local motels. Following are some of the motels in the western portion of Jackson. On Highway 80 West are Drake Motor Inn, Holiday Inn Southwest, Holiday Terrace Motel, Knights Inn, Scottish Inns of America, and United Budget Inn. At Ellis Ave. and I-20 West is Metrocenter Ramada Inn, and I-20 at Terry Road is La Quinta Motor Inn.

The program is sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Evangelism department. Don Witzel, minister of youth at Jackson's Calvary Baptist Church, will be emcee.



Missionary Journeyman Youth Director Sandra (Sandy) Snell and missionary pastor of Calvary International Baptist Church in Bangkok, Thailand, search the English newspaper ads for housing in the area. (Photo by Maxine Stewart)

Sandy Snell Settles Into Two Year Program

Missionary Journeyman Sandra (Sandy) Snell arrived in Bangkok, Thailand, August 15, where she is serving a two year term as youth director at Calvary International Baptist Church, working with missionary pastor W. Mack Burris.

Miss Snell arrived in time to work with the pastor in helping locate suitable living quarters, which the church wanted her to help select prior to renting, and to plan for her first Youth Activity two weeks later, a get together for high school students living in Bangkok and those moving into the Baptist Hostel from the provinces and from other countries for the new school year.

Miss Snell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Reese Harris Snell of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, comes with high quali-

cations with good training and experiences in youth related work among which has been Girl Scout leader, freshman counselor, worker with underprivileged youth, youth choir, folk ensemble, handbells, puppets, discipline class, VBS teacher, summer day camp worker and children's church worker.

She is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi and was an active member of Temple Baptist Church, both in Hattiesburg.

Counselors Hear Of Jobs Related To Health Field

Forty junior and senior high school counselors from central Mississippi attended Baptist Medical Center's second "Health Careers Unlimited" seminar recently to learn about the increasing job opportunities in the health related fields.

Instructors and students from MBMC's four health related schools (respiratory therapy, medical technology, licensed practical nursing, radiologic technology) presented slide presentations and outlines about the four training programs at MBMC and also discussed job opportunities in Mississippi, pre-requisite courses, salaries and responsibilities of the health-related occupations.

A luncheon was held for the counselors where Paul Pryor, MBMC's executive administrator, briefly discussed the MBMC programs and opportunities for students interested in working in the health related fields.

Instructors and coordinators who planned the program include Paulette Weaver and Cindy Gant, practical nursing program; Betty Covington, medical technology; Joyce Williams and Tonya Therrell, radiologic technology; Pat Matthews and David Jordan, respiratory therapy; Beth Herring, registered nurse; Kathy Bearden, MBMC Baptist Student Union director; and Karen Crenshaw, public relations assistant.



James Smith and other speakers visited city parks to gather Indians in for Bible study and Vacation Bible School.

James Smith To Speak At B'hood Rally

James Smith, executive director of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, based in Memphis, Tenn., will be featured speaker for the 1980 Mississippi Baptist Brotherhood Rally, Nov. 10, at the A. E. Wood Coliseum at Mississippi College, Clinton.

The rally consists of two portions — a banquet, featuring Grady Nutt, and a conference, featuring Smith.

The banquet begins at 5 p.m. that evening and requires advance dinner ticket purchase from the Brotherhood department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which is sponsoring the rally.

The conference portion begins at 7 p.m. and is free.

Smith is former executive secretary of the Illinois Baptist Convention.

Tickets for the banquet are available at \$5 per person. Write Brotherhood department, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205, or phone (note new number) 968-3334.

Blue Mountain

Music Correction

Among the musicians listed in the Baptist Record two weeks ago for the Mississippi Baptist Convention, the Blue Mountain College Singers were incorrectly referred to as the Blue Mountain College Choir. Nancy Ellis is director instead of Charles Meyer as noted.

Remaining consistently wrong, last week's Baptist Record, in a story on a keyboard festival, sponsored by BMC and the MBCB Church Music department, said G. Edward Ludlow was head of the BMC music department. Ludlow is associate professor of organ and church music. Charles Meyer is chairman of the music department.

Carey President's Father Dies At 79

R. L. Noonkester, father of J. Ralph Noonkester, president of William Carey College, died Oct. 14 in Marion, Va. He was 79. Funeral was Oct. 16 at Marion Baptist Church, Marion, Va. Before retirement, Noonkester was employed with the Virginia State Hospital System.

Survivors in addition to his son Ralph of Hattiesburg, include his wife, Ardie Katherine Parks Noonkester; one other son, two daughters, all of Virginia; and one brother, of Baltimore, Md.

Choctaw Trek

(Continued from page 1)

tion time for Ben, who is a bivocational pastor, working as a counselor with the Manpower Program.

The New Choctaw Association, meeting recently, voted expense money for Ben's return trip. The original mission trip was financed through local mission funds, church offerings, and an offering taken during the association's monthly hymn singing meeting.

Mary Ben, Choctaw tribal bookkeeper, said of the trip that now when she reads in Royal Service (Woman's Missionary Union missions magazine) of missionaries saying "Send us some more help. Now I understand what they mean."

Home Board Approves '81 Budget, Votes Support Of Urban Control

(Continued from page 1)
areas," said William G. Tanner, board president. "Creation of this center is an effort to turn things around and start gaining ground."

The center will be located at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn. The Foreign Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union will participate with the seminaries, Home Mission Board and Sunday School Board.

Robert Deneen of Darlington, S. C., outlined more than 290 stated goals of the board for 1981. Among those goals are plans to recruit 450 missions personnel, to acquaint one million Baptists with biblical and historical understanding of spiritual awakening, to enlist 800 Mission Service Corps Volunteers, to provide at least \$20 million for new church construction and to maintain 60 US-2 missionaries on fields of service.

"These goals have a definite effect on Home Mission Board planning and strategy," Cockrum said. "They make a difference in what the board will be doing."

In response to requests from the field, the board added associate director positions in mass evangelism and in personal evangelism, effective Jan. 1, 1981.

"We're delighted, simply because the field has given us the demand for these positions," said C. B. Hogue, vice president for evangelism. "In order to fulfill our first objective (evangelizing the United States) and to equip state directors of evangelism, we need these staff positions. One man working at each task is not enough."

Irvin Dawson, formerly associate director of missionary personnel, was named director of the missionary personnel department. He will give leadership, supervision and correlation to recruitment and screening of all candidates for missionary appointment by the board.

He has been pastor in North Carolina and mission pastor in California. He also has been director of language missions for the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention and assistant secretary and associate director of the Home Mission Board Language Missions Division. He is a graduate of the University of Richmond and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dawson replaces Don Rhymes, who resigned to become pastor of Prays Mill Baptist Church in Douglasville, Ga.

The board explained it will funnel as much of the 1981 budget as possible

into missions and evangelism endeavors and will stretch dollars that will be spent to conduct day-to-day business.

Although air fare costs have climbed more than 30 percent in the past year, HMB travel costs were expanded only about 10 percent in the new budget, he illustrated. Budgets for office supplies, long distance telephone calls and similar items were not increased at all.

Major budget allocations include \$27.59 million for missions, \$2.62 million for evangelism, \$1.34 million for general administration and special projects, \$650,000 for planning and \$4.4 million for support services.

The budget also reflects an emphasis on personnel. It provides salary increases for missionaries, leadership staff and office support personnel. It also provides for a new retirement plan which eventually will allow the board to contribute 10 percent of all employee salaries into retirement annuities.

At Mesa Church

N. Y. Native Reports Spiritual Awakening

Statistics at Mesa Church near Tyler town have taken a sharp upward turn during the past year. There have been 53 baptisms (up 400% over the average of the 10 previous years.) Thirty-five have joined the church by letter (up 350%). Sunday School enrollment increased by 61%. Vacation Bible School enrollment was 138, up 45% over previous years, and total receipts were up 62%.

According to Charles Didato, pastor, the church had an average Sunday School attendance of 60 for the ten years before 1979, and an average of six baptisms per year in those years.

Didato, a native of New York, moved on the church field a year ago, in October, 1979. He was graduated from New Orleans Seminary in May, 1980.

Raised in New York City, Didato and his family relocated in the Pacific Northwest when he went there as an engineer in the nuclear industry. He said, "It was in the state of Washington that I met the Lord Jesus Christ and my life was changed from material needs to spiritual satisfaction. After surrendering to the ministry I pastored in the Pacific Northwest until the Lord called me to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. It was an unbelievable experience for myself and my family." The pastor, 41, and his wife have four children.

During his last year at seminary he was asked to supply at Mesa Church in Mississippi. "I thought nothing about the prospect of preaching in Tyler town," he recalls, "as I had my sights set on going back to the Northwest. From the time I entered Mesa Church I knew God wanted me here."

During the past year the church has bought a bus, built a basketball court, air-conditioned the education section, and remodeled the pastorium, all without borrowing any money. "These people truly have captured the spirit of faith and trust in the Lord," said the pastor.

Pasadena, Calif. (EP) — Possibly the only indigenous missions society presently in South Africa has recently been founded to inform that unaware country of its part in the evangelization of the world's unreached peoples. The goal of the Africa Society for Frontier Missions is to raise missionary interest and personnel in the country's churches, according to spokesmen at African Enterprise.

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The Baptist Record

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Editorials

Clarke College decision . . .

The trustees stand tall

A group of men and women in Mississippi stood tall recently as they hammered out a solution for a very difficult problem.

They are the trustees of Clarke College, and the problem of seeking a course of action for a faltering college was squarely on their shoulders. Let it be said that they did not try to avoid that responsibility, nor did they seek to shift the burden to someone else or delay a decision in hopes that the problem would resolve itself. They met it squarely.

The result of the trustees' decision is to be found in last week's and this week's issues.

These trustees began their deliberations on the problem more than a year ago as they declared that they needed help. Help was provided in the form of a study by the Southern Baptist Education Commission, and conclusions were drawn from the study. Then the trustees made their decision on the basis of the study and the suggested conclusions. They decided to seek to continue the ministry of their school by asking for a merger with a stronger institution. They were aware that the implementation of such a suggestion would mean the end of their service as

trustees.

Theirs was a responsible decision. It was one that will be a milepost in Mississippi Baptist history. It was a courageous decision. And it was the right decision.

So much by so many had gone into the ministry of Clarke College. But it was failing. There could be many reasons cited for such circumstances perhaps, but the primary culprit is a lack of students. Schools need a great deal of money to stay in business, and the source of the largest amount of money is tuition. The SBC study said Clarke would need 300 students to stay alive, but this year's enrollment is 200. This is an increase from last year's 160 or so. So the bare minimum 300 didn't seem to be in sight.

Yet with so much having been poured into the school and 200 students depending on it for an education, what direction is the right one? The trustees sacrificed themselves in order to see the school continue.

Will the merger make that much difference in enrollment? It should. Immediately after Mississippi College joins in the merger the students will be a part of a four-year operation.

There are too many heroes in this episode to name them all. Surely M. L. Flynt and John Brock, the chairman and vice-chairman of the trustees, should be named. There are Kermit McGregor, the Education Commission chairman until he was sidelined by a heart attack, and Billy Thames, the vice-chairman who succeeded him. There is Joe Tuten, the former chairman whose council was valuable all along. There are A. C. Johnson, the Clarke president, and Earl Kelly, the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board executive secretary-treasurer.

Don't forget the Clarke faculty members and administrative staff members who have poured their lives into the school. Remember the members of the Clarke trustees and the members of the Christian Education Commission. The work of Arthur Walker and George Capps of the SBC Education Commission must be cited.

Another who deserves the commendation of Mississippi Baptists as decisions are being made relating to this situation is Lewis Nobles, president of Mississippi College. Surely he and the Mississippi College administration, the faculty, and the trustees are to be

commended as they have faced the prospect of taking over the reins and some of the teaching load, perhaps, at the much smaller school and have declared, "We will be glad to help."

Nobles told the Christian Education Commission, "If an institution is in trouble, then we'll all in trouble. If one can help another, we ought to. We need to work together to solve a problem, not work in competition."

He added, "It will be our sincere conviction that this move will complement the programs of both campuses as they currently exist."

So many people who have meant so much — they all are owed a debt of gratitude by Mississippi Baptists.

The merger still needs the approval of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Such approval would give Clarke College an opportunity to continue its 72-year ministry. Any other decision could not help but put a limit on that ministry.

One thing for which Baptists are known is that when they are given the facts with which to make a responsible decision, they make the right one. Surely this will be no exception.

In Rankin County . . .

Liquor election Nov. 4

The Baptist Record has found itself involved in liquor fights in the Legislature and in the effort to make downtown Jackson a resort area so that liquor could be sold around the clock.

Except for the fact that the Legislature has not been able to buck certain powerful interests there and pass a law that would lower the blood alcohol content for intoxication, things have gone pretty well in the effort to keep the liquor traffic from making headway in Mississippi. For instance, the Senate killed an effort during the last session to make a portion of Lamar County wet without the county-wide referendum that is required by the constitution.

Now my county is facing a county-wide referendum on liquor. I live in Rankin County, and it is dry at this time. I've heard the tired arguments

that leaving a county dry paves the way for bootlegging. The same argument would take away any penalty for murder. It's better to have a law enforced part of the time than to have no law at all.

I've heard the claims that liquor brings in revenue for the county, but also it is a fact that it brings in added expenditures for enforcement of the laws that are needed to try to keep a lid on the problems caused by drinking. Most people agree that the enforcement expenditures are greater than revenue income.

Of course, liquor expenses that are not measured are in heartache, broken dreams, broken families, lost production, degradation, and lost income. This is not to mention the aggravation that comes from all the empty cans and bottles that get thrown along

streets and in yards.

The fact is that nobody really gains from liquor sales but the seller.

It is the seller who pushes for liquor sales. Those who seek the license to buy it and drink it are insensitive to the problems it causes their neighbors. They also ignore the problems it brings to themselves.

So now Rankin County is facing a liquor referendum on Nov. 4. We appeal to all right-thinking voters in Rankin County to get to the polls that day and vote against this abominable substance.

A great deal of the reservoir residential community is located in Rankin County. There are larger numbers of residents at the reservoir living in Rankin County than in wet Madison County. Perhaps it is because Rankin

County is dry.

If there is any place that alcohol and gasoline don't mix, it is at a lake. Boat drivers are not all as careful as they should be under the best of circumstances. Add liquor into the picture, and the situation can become downright dangerous. There is no denying this no matter what kind of a howl the liquor interests put up in an effort to draw attention away from it. There is more than enough liquor on Ross Barnett Reservoir already from the Madison County side. The situation certainly doesn't need what would be brought in from Rankin County. Sure they bring it in already, but not nearly in the quantities that they would if there were no restrictions.

The remainder of the state cannot vote in our liquor election. Please remember to pray for us in Rankin County. —DTM

Letters To The Editor

Christians and Politics

Editor:

You do a great disservice to your readers and to the new Christian Right when you imply that the Christian Right is trying to force people to become Christians through political action as you did in your editorial of October 2. Hundreds of Mississippians who have attended the meetings of the Religious Roundtable in Tupelo and Starkville know the truth. If you will take the time to attend the meeting in Jackson on October 27 and 28, you too can know and report the truth.

It is legitimate to question the involvement of the church in politics. It is not legitimate to question only the right of the conservatives to engage in politics. Where was the hue and cry in the past when the National and World Council of Churches representing the mainline churches supported the same Marxist terrorists in Africa who shot down an airliner with a Soviet ground-to-air missile? When some of the same mainline churches implied that it was un-Christian not to support their social gospel, which included civil disobedience; demonstrating in the

streets on issues ranging from civil rights to the draft.

Why is it a violation of Church and State separation for conservative Christians to meet in secular meeting places and espouse their beliefs?

Why is it a violation of separation of Church and State for Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and James Robinson to express their views and not for the Reverend Jesse Jackson and the Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr. to campaign openly?

Are you as concerned that a national holiday is being considered to honor the late Martin Luther King, Jr. for the involvement of his church in politics as you are that Jerry Falwell is involving his church in politics?

Separation of Church and State is a serious question, but what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. As a Christian and an editor, you owe your readers fair treatment on this and every other subject. Let's hope we see more balanced and fair treatment in the future.

Carl D. Ford
Laurel

Editor:

Your subtle bias against conservatives, be they political, religious or a combination of both is showing. You started off on a tirade against the prayer amendment proposal which

school day begins lends itself to a sobering influence on students. The Christian ethic is established for those young minds for the day. A written prayer is another story but a prayer over the school's public address system by a teacher or a student is not wrong, nor is it unconstitutional. It was just that simple at Pearl and the ACLU, without indentifying the complainant, went to court and nullified an attempt to combat the prince of this world.

The other point I wish to take you to task on is the issue of the Moral Majority. I am not a member of this group, but see no harm in Christians exerting a conservative influence in politics. We have sat back and allowed our great nation to flounder in the disgrace of defeat both morally and politically. The weak-kneed leadership and outright fraud and immoral conduct in Washington is reflected in our attitude toward government. Honest, hard-working, taxpaying citizens have simply given up in despair.

Harry L. Cole
Ruth, Miss.

Our lethargic condition as citizens is reflected in the problems in Washington. It will not be until those honest, hard-working, taxpaying citizens shake off their lethargy and get

gated to such organizations as the Religious Roundtable, with Ed McAteer of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, as president and organizer: The Moral Majority, led by Jerry Falwell; and the Christian Voice.

You use such phrases as "as has been pointed out in many news articles lately" and "according to news sources" which indicates that much of your information comes from these sources and possibly not first hand from having attended one of these meetings. If this is the case, then this in itself is not good.

I first of all want to thank God for men and organizations like this who are exerting every effort to rally Americans for God. We have attended two meetings of the Roundtable, and if these people are not doing what we Southern Baptist can approve, endorse, help finance and pray for and make ourselves 100 percent available to assist, then we've got the problem — not them.

All of these meetings that I have attended and all that I know anything about have informed people and urged Christians to vote and get involved... and what in the world can be wrong with that?

Our family roots are deep as South-

When I heard that Bobbie Hester is retiring this month, you could have knocked me over with a feather. I still can't believe she was 65 on Oct. 21. Slim and trim, feminine, quietly graceful. That's Bobbie. Her light brown hair is always well groomed. Her blue eyes mirror vitality and friendly warmth.

She and her husband John are members of Broadmoor Baptist Church in Jackson. For 30 years she has been a teacher in Sunday School. Now, she said, she hopes to have more time for "class ministry."

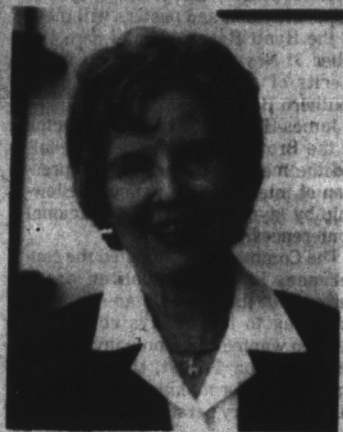
Six and one-half years ago she was preparing to take early retirement at McKesson & Robbins Wholesale Drugs (now Foremost-McKesson), where she had been secretary to the division manager for 24 years. Then Doris Hart, also a former employee with the drug company, told her about an opening for an office secretary in the state Brotherhood department. Last week Bobbie observed, "I truly love my Baptist Building 'family.'"

She told me that John took early retirement 2½ years ago, after working for 38 years with the state highway department. As he had not played golf since high school he has been making up for lost time by playing four or five mornings a week. Bobbie said she wants to learn how to play golf — at least how to hit the ball! She added, "Sewing used to be one of my favorite things, and I hope to get back to it. Reading, too, is one of my favorite activities." I think she's a good cook. Soon she can "cook big noon meals." Her recipe for pineapple cake is:

Use your favorite yellow cake recipe, or yellow cake mix. Bake in two layers and when cool, chill until firm. Slice each layer to make 4 layers.
Bring to a boil 1 large (about 20oz.) can of crushed pineapple and ¼ cup sugar. If you use unsweetened pineapple, use ½ cup sugar. Dissolve 1 tablespoon plain gelatin in ¼ cup cool water, then add to hot pineapple mixture. Place in refrigerator and cool.
Whip ½ pint of heavy whipping cream and fold into the pineapple mixture. Frost the cake, turning the cut side of the cake up for the frosting.
Keep in refrigerator. This cake also freezes well.

A couple of years ago Bobbie and John drove over 6500 miles to and through the west. One of their two sons lives in California at Laguna Beach, so many future trips may be to the west. Douglas is an industrial designer with Volt Sporting Goods. Jack, who lives in New Orleans, is field engineer with ABASCO. Douglas has two sons; Jack has a daughter.

Bobbie, born in Meridian, was reared in a family of Methodists. Her father died when she was six. Then, to add to the family income for two sons and two daughters, Bobbie's mother, Jennie Graham Williams, sold pro-



ducts for California Perfume Company (now Avon) and later sold Bibles. Bobbie's first job in the mid-'30s was in a Meridian bank. E. Kahn. Later she worked in a law office.

While still in high school she started dating John, Laurel native who had moved to Meridian. They got married in Meridian, 46 years ago, Oct. 22, the day after her birthday.

Bobbie said of her marriage, "The most important thing is that the Lord has been so good to us. We have had troubles and dark times, but there has always been a deep joy running through the troubles because of the ever conscious realization that the Everlasting Arms are underneath. Even during the dark years of separation during World War II (he was with Air Force Engineers, in the Pacific), that deeper joy was there, and John and I felt it and knew the reason. He felt God's protection many times. I counted his time away from the boys and me by Christmases, and he was away for three Christmases."

While John was in the Pacific, Bobbie joined his church, First Baptist, Meridian, and Norman Cox, pastor, baptized her. At the time she was working as a secretary at Central Presbyterian Church, Meridian. A Presbyterian elder told her, "Now if you will somehow affiliate with the synagogue, you will be well-rounded."

The Hesters moved to Jackson in 1947.

Linda Douglas, Bobbie's co-worker in Brotherhood, said, "I think she's a saint! She's sweet and understanding and the two of us have never had a single argument." Paul Harrell, Brotherhood director, added, "Bobbie has displayed a gracious, optimistic spirit that has become contagious to us all. She is efficient and thoroughly organized. She is a most healthy person, for not one day of work has she missed because of illness."

Look Before You Knock

Editor:

Shame on you! Did you really write the editorial "The Christianizing of America... Nor in the Voting Booth"?

You quoted a news article and a news source. Have you been there? Have you seen? Have you heard? Your neighbors might tell me about you, but do they know? You need to be there to know, and I hope you will attend The Roundtable meeting in Jackson, Oct. 27-28.

Have you read, "The Eleventh Hour," by General Lewis W. Walt, U.S.M.C. (Ret.)? In Chapter IX page 69 under "The Stories They Don't Tell," the first two sentences state, "Ours has been called the age of mass media. For many Americans much of their perception of reality is a result of information received from the news media." If you haven't read the book, why not do so.

You don't know what The Roundtable is or you wouldn't quote the media. America is in trouble and The Roundtable is trying to educate us as to some of the things that are going on and how we can help as God-fearing, God-loving Christian Americans. We must come back to the Lord if America remains. The Roundtable states, "Is there not a cause" (I Sam. 17:29). It tells us, too, that "56 men who stood

are just craving notoriety that they will listen to these promises. All they want is to get their picture on the front page of Newsweek, Time or some of these papers and get lots of press writeups.

Just as Jerry Falwell has; he managed to get his picture in Newsweek and get their pages of writeup; but after all, he had to admit he lied about President Carter as the tapes proved it. He also had to get up on TV and admit it. I heard this. He didn't say he was sorry. Just said he would not do so again.

All these things cause differences in our Baptist people. It's your privilege to be a Republican, but you have no right to use the Baptist Record to promote your own views. I am not the only one that feels this way. I have had several people express their views. When you think how Carter had to follow Ford and Nixon, with mistakes I am sure he had made, it would take a long time to overcome all these others before him.

I can't imagine all these "big preachers" you named meeting with Reagan and getting his promises when he belongs to a denomination that's never been mentioned. I am an old woman and not so prejudiced but that I still think there are Christians in all of them. But I am a loyal Democrat and a



PINE GROVE CHURCH, YALOBUSHA COUNTY, recently held a note burning service. The church debt was paid in less than 16 months. Pictured, left to right, are Ralph Harrison, James Gray, Jerry Brownlee, pastor, and Everette Harrison, Finley Evans, Yalobusha director of missions, also was on program.



The members of the 1980 Executive Council for the Baptist Student Union of Jones County Junior College are planning activities for the new school year. Past activities include special events during the week of registration for all new students, the fall retreat held at Gulfshore, and Christian Vocational Emphasis Week.

Upcoming activities include Mission Emphasis Week, and several projects to raise money toward the \$3,300 summer missions goal.

In addition to these activities, the Evangelism Team, Puppet Team, and the ensemble, Newlight, conduct services in various churches and associations throughout the eight supporting counties of Clarke, Covington, Greene, Jasper, Jones, Perry, Smith, and Wayne.

Members of the Executive Council are as follows: SEATED: Renee Hinton - noon-day chairman (Jones), Kim Stringer - outreach chairman (Jones), Gina Browning - secretary/newsletter (Clarke), Tracy Simmons - social chairman (Jones), Cyndie Beech - morning watch chairman (Jones). CENTER ROW: John F. Sumner, Jr., director, Mrs. Charlotte Clark - office secretary, Floyd Biglane - puppet chairman (Jackson), Troy Gibbons - evangelism chairman (Smith), Troy Puckett - president (Smith), Mona Buckalew - intramurals chairman (Jones), Richard Rivers - faculty advisor.

BACK ROW: Richard O'Neal - music chairman (Jones), Randy Sims - missions chairman (Jones), Mark Hayman - publicity chairman (Smith), Steven Jefcoat - vice-president (Jones), and Larry Golf - pastor advisor.

NOT PICTURED: Linda Knight - lounge chairman (Covington), Joey Cooley - intramurals (Jones), and Carlos McDaniel - faculty advisor.

Revival Dates

North McComb Church, McComb: will be Nov. 2-7; the week before to be spent in preparation by the Sunday School leading in a people-search and activities for age groups; a men and boy breakfast is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 2, plus dinner on the grounds; Talmadge Smith of Morgantown Church, Natchez, preaching; Hollis Fraser of Tylertown Church directing the music; weekdays at 7 p.m.; Joe H. Ratcliff, pastor.

Oak Grove Church, Mize (Smith): Oct. 26-29; Ricky Kennedy, pastor Leesburg Church, Morton, evangelist; Billy Thames, singer; services 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mike Thompson, pastor.

Griffith Memorial, Jackson: Nov. 2-5; Robert M. Hanvey, pastor, First Hazlehurst, evangelist; Earl Owen, minister of music at Griffith Memorial, music evangelist; Sunday services at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. at 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Gary Knapp, pastor.

Sunshine Church (Rankin): Oct. 26-31; James Fancher, evangelist; Bob Coleman, singer; services 7 p.m.; Sam Creel, pastor.

Gillsburg (Mississippi Association): Oct. 26-29; Sunday, usual times; Mon.-Wed. at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; C. I. Miller, pastor of Woodhaven Church, Ocean Springs, evangelist; Stuart Hemphill, Gillsburg Church, director of music; Terri Bishop, pianist; Mrs. Hilda Blount, organist; Joseph L. Small, pastor.

Parkhill Church, Jackson: Oct. 26-29; Bob Hutcherson, pastor, First Church, Florence, evangelist; James Beasley, minister of music/youth, First Church, Crystal Springs, leading the music; Sunday services at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; weekday at 7:30 p.m.; James C. Edwards, pastor; Robert Bain, music director.

Most people never forget a favor, especially if they did it.

Pelahatchie Church Builds

By Inez Watts Summer

Sunday, Sept. 28, was an eventful day in the history of Pelahatchie Baptist Church. It marked the close of the ministry of Carl R. Nelson; the installation of workers for 1980-81; and a ground breaking service for a new education building.

Approximately 125 men, women, and young people make up the staff and leadership of the church. As Nelson installed these, he read Matthew 25:14-30, and challenged the church and its leaders with a message on "Serving the Lord."

At 11:45 a.m. the congregation adjourned to the ground breaking site where Edwin Davis, chairman of the Building Committee, presided. Russ

McClelland with his guitar, led in hymns of praise. Davis gave the welcome. Joe Davis, mayor of Pelahatchie, led in prayer. Helen Smith read a history of the church.

Nelson presented the platform guests: members of the Building Committee; Mayor Davis; R. C. Rice, representing Rankin County Baptists; Dennis Coniff, director, Church Architecture, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; Watts Clark, architect; Ted Peagler, builder; and Margie Warren, Building Fund treasurer.

In the ground breaking ceremony, the Building Committee and Nelson turned the dirt. Dinner was served on the grounds.



FIRST CHURCH, PELAHATCHIE broke ground Sept. 28, for a new education building. The building committee members, left to right, are: Edwin Davis, chairman, Carl Nelson, pastor, Leon Johnson, Gary Carpenter, Zane Townsend, and Howard Stevens. Sept. 28 was Nelson's last Sunday as pastor of the church. He has accepted a pastorate in Oklahoma and he and his wife Martha have moved to Purcell. — Photo by Clyreese Smith.

WHEATON, II. (EP) — The \$13.5 million Billy Graham Center was dedicated at Wheaton College here Sept. 13 with a challenge by Charles Malik, former president of the United Nations General Assembly, to use it for "evangelizing the great universities, and intellectualizing the great evangelical movement."

Malik suggested that the new Center think about establishing an institute devoted to finding out the truth of what is happening to the humanities in the great universities of Europe and America. "Christ being the light of the world, His light must be brought to bear on the problem of the formation of the mind. The investigation will have to be accomplished with the utmost discretion and humility."

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — E. Odell Crowe, 30-year employee of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, has been named the first director of the Holman division, the board's Bible publishing arm.

Crowe, 55, has been manager of the operations department in the board's book store division for seven years, where he was responsible for advertising and for merchandising recommendations to Baptist book stores. He assumes the new position immediately.

Holman, the first Bible publishing company in America, was purchased 18 months ago by the Sunday School Board.

Homecomings

Riverside Church, Money, will observe homecoming day Sunday, Oct. 26. A special program will begin at 10 a.m. Dinner on the grounds will be served at 12. An afternoon concert will feature Tommy Kelly, plus congregational singing. Preston Kelly, Jr., is pastor.

Brewer Church, Perry County, will have homecoming day on Nov. 2. John Henry, former pastor at Brewer, will preach at the morning service. Lunch will be served at the church. An afternoon service will be one of singing. Ray Allen is pastor.

Pleasant Hill Church, Leake County, will observe homecoming day Oct. 26. Max Jones, evangelist, former pastor at Pleasant Hill, will be the guest speaker at 11 a.m. Pastor Jimmy D. McDill states that the song service in the afternoon will feature the Gospel Echoes of Pearl. Dinner will be served on the grounds.

Mt. Zion Church, Leake County, has set Oct. 26 as old-fashioned homecoming day. Activities will include Sunday School at 10 a.m.; worship hour at 11 a.m., with Paul McDonald, former pastor, as special speaker; noon meal at the church; afternoon service with recognition of former pastors and special singing by The Believers from Philadelphia, Miss. Jessie Scott, Jr. is the pastor.

Eastabuchie Church, J. D. Davis, pastor, observed homecoming and 97th anniversary services on Sunday, Oct. 19. T. K. Ford was guest speaker at the morning service. The afternoon service featured the Reflections Quartet. Dinner was served on the grounds.

Pleasant Grove Honors Treasurer

Pleasant Grove Church (Wayne) gave a reception Oct. 5 in honor of Mrs. Author (Ruby) Cleckler.

Mrs. Cleckler had concluded 24 years of continuous service as treasurer and financial secretary of the church.

A table in the fellowship hall was decorated with a live tree covered with letters of love and appreciation.

Mrs. Cleckler was escorted to a chair by the tree by Mrs. George Lassett, Sr. and Mrs. Howard Wimberly. She was crowned and told she was to be a queen for an hour.

Dicky McAllister, pastor, paid tribute to her for her years of service and asked if he might pluck one letter from her tree and read it.

Mrs. S. T. Varner read a paper on which she had estimated the number of hours and the gallons of gasoline that Mrs. Cleckler had given in carrying out the duties in the church office.

At this time she was presented with an album (for the letters) from her Sunday School class. Then James Meeks, chairman of deacons, appeared with a large box. Inside it was a large silver serving tray engraved with the dates 1956-1980, a gift from the entire church.

Mrs. Cleckler and her husband Author have served in other capacities in the church. He had served for many years as church clerk until a few years ago. For more than 13 years Mrs. Cleckler had a perfect attendance record in Sunday School. They have two daughters, Mrs. Charles Tiner and Mrs. Julian Radcliffe. At present, Mrs. Tiner is church pianist at Pleasant Grove and Mrs. Radcliffe is director of youth in the church.

W. R. Austin, Preacher, Retires; "Absent One Sunday in 44 Years"

W. R. Austin of Ripley has retired from the active ministry after 47 years of service. He and Mrs. Austin will continue to serve the Lord as members of First Church, Ripley.

He ended his career at Toccoola Church, Pontotoc County, where he has served for ten years. His retirement was effective Sept. 28.

During the 47 years he served Shady Grove, Panola County; Bethel, Yalobusha County; Providence, Pleasant Grove; and Hebron, Grenada County (Hebron was the result of a state convention program in 1946, where pastors went out and held revivals to begin new churches); Red Hill, Montgomery County; Taylor, Philadelphia, Anchor, and Paris.

Lafayette County; Roundaway, Sunflower County; Ellison Ridge, and Oak Grove, Winston County; Coldwater, Neshoba County; Port Wentworth, and Vernon Hills, Savannah, Ga.

Austin was pastor from 1961 to 1970 in Savannah. Also, five and a half years of that time he worked with the Domestic Relations Court to help rehabilitate juvenile delinquents.

The Austins have four children, Mrs. Charlie Parks, New Albany; Wm. M. Austin, Savannah, Ga.; James A. Austin, Hernando; and Rev. Barney E. Austin, Millry, Ala.

Austin was ordained in October, 1933. His daughter, Charlie Parks, reports that during the first 44 years of his ministry he only missed church one

time. She said, "He had pneumonia and would have preached anyway, but the doctor arrived in time to prevent his going to church."

She added, "In 1977, he had surgery; this was his first time to be a patient in a hospital. Had it not been for this surgery he might have had 47 years with only one absence."

Staff Changes

Sam Creel in September moved to Sunshine Church, Rankin County, as pastor. He formerly was pastor of the Highland Church in Jackson.

David Holt has resigned as pastor of Pulaski Church, Scott County. He is available for revivals, or as supply or interim pastor. He may be contacted at Box 7, Pulaski, Miss. (phone 732-2293) or through H. H. Carlisle, the Scott County missionary (phone 469-1951).

John E. Howard has joined the staff of the Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, as minister of youth. He was graduated from Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., and is a recent graduate of New Orleans Seminary, with a master of divinity degree.

Howard

Harold Anderson, former pastor of Friendship Church, Aberdeen, is now serving as interim pastor of Athens Church, Aberdeen.

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SCRAPBOOK

God's Rhythm

His constant rhythm
I see
in maroon oak leaves
as they swirl and fall,
a late monarch butterfly
looping over a patch
of lavender morningglories,
pumpkins sunning themselves,
their skins harvest moon golden.
At roadside stands
baskets brimming over
with rusty pears, wine-red apples,
freshly dug sweet potatoes,
catch my eye.

His rhythm
I hear in
wild geese calling,
answering an age-old timing
for their flight south,
the slapping of waves
against wooden piers,
splashing of rain
on a tin bucket,
wind blowing
through a thicket of pines.

I sense His rhythm
in the reading
of the ninety-eighth psalm,
"Make a joyful noise
unto the Lord,
all the earth...
and rejoice and sing praise."
I know the rhythm
of the seasons
tells of Him.

—Eunice Barnes
Pascagoula

Flag Lake Plans Harvest Day

Flag Lake Baptist Church, Tate County, will have homecoming, dedication of the new educational building and recently renovated and furnished auditorium, and harvest day activities on Nov. 2.

The pastor, Jackie Yow, will bring the Harvest Day sermon Sunday morning with Jimmy Houston of the Pearl Haven Baptist Church bringing the dedication service that afternoon at 2 p.m. and singing in the afternoon. Sunday School is at 9:45 a.m. and worship at 11:15.

Autumn

When I think of the season, that I love the very best
I have to say that Autumn rates high above the rest.
It brings so many memories of when I was a child
The nights were cool and pleasant, and days were fair and mild.

The old farm where I was raised was nothing fine to see,
But Autumn brought the magic touch, 'twas beautiful to me
The hickory trees were yellow, the poplars were gold
Sweet gums were red, and some were brown, such beauty to behold!

All the things that I enjoyed when Autumn came around
Chinquapins, wild grapes and hickory nuts we found
Peanuts roasting in the pan and sometimes chestnuts too
Pecans to hull, popcorn to pop, and sugar cane to chew.

I know that all the good things are sent from God above,
And when you're close to nature, your heart is full of love
So every year when Autumn comes, I'll love it even more,
Because I know each year I'll have more memories in store.

—Ruth Norsworthy Crager
State Line, MS

Off the Highway

Whenever I drive on a bridge
I always look for the water below,
and I would idle my car to slow,
but rearview traffic pressures
me to hurry with the world — Go!

Today I slid among the bushes
and trailed a forest road
along the bank where the river strode.
Off the highway from the world
in my little car I rode.

I parked in still autumnal swamps
in woodland glory tucked away
as God had clothed it for a day,
with red and yellow trees
blooming in quiet array.

Then as Samuel said to Saul,
"Sit still awhile that I may show you
the word of God," I began to accrue
some knowledge of what to do
about a problem I can't solve.

—Violet Tackett

October

Orange pumpkins;
Shocks of brown corn;
Bronze chrysanthemums;
A white frosty morn.

Sights of October;
A bright blue sky;
Crisp cool weather;
Southward birds fly.

—Sarah Peugh

Second Peter 1:19

I love to see the morning star,
It shines so wondrous bright,
Sometimes it's cradled by the moon
Relinquishing the night.

I love to watch the daylight creep,
And push the curtains back,
To see a blaze of sunlight sweep
And hide the dawn's track.

So as I start some daily task
I find the strength anew
And for my loved ones I then ask
The Day Star to keep them, too.

—Valerie Boyd Howell

Mt. Pisgah Will Celebrate Centennial

Mt. Pisgah Church, Tallahatchie County, on Sunday, Oct. 26, will celebrate its 100th year. Services will include Sunday School at 10 a.m., morning worship at 11, dinner on the grounds, and an afternoon program of gospel music at 1:30.

The pastor, J. C. Hall, will bring the morning message. The Harmony Boys Quartet of Louisville will be featured guests in the afternoon service.



Names In The News

Doug and Greg Holloway, children of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Holloway, have completed one year in perfect Sunday School attendance at Valley Park Church, Sharkey-Issaquena Association, W. D. Kirk, pastor.

Star Church ordained David L. Byrd and John W. Baker as deacons on Sept. 28, during the evening worship service. Star Church is involved in the deacon family ministry plan. Jimmy Harrington is pastor.

Melvin Walters has received a pin for 15 years perfect attendance at Sunday School, presented by Moak's Creek Church, Lincoln County, on Sept. 28. Others receiving awards at Moak's Creek for perfect Sunday School attendance were Burney Parker, Christy Crosby, Ricky Crosby, Melinda Moak, Dorothy Moak, Earline Hall, Harrell McClelland, Edwin Johnson, Judson Johnson. Edwin Johnson also was recognized for perfect attendance in Church Training. Cecil Hubbard is pastor.

Billy Cagle, senior at Blue Mountain College, is entering full-time evangelism and is available for revivals and supply preaching. Converted at age 14 and licensed to preach in 1977, he was ordained to the ministry in June of this year at his home church, Brookhaven Church, Decatur, Ala. Donald R. Howell, pastor. He is a graduate of Clarke College, and plans later to attend Southwestern Seminary. At Blue Mountain he is president of the Ministerial Association.

Cagle may be contacted through the college, or his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Cagle, 1211 Stuart Ave., SW, Decatur, Ala. 35601.

MRS. ANNIE RUCKER has received a perfect attendance pin in Sunday School for 25 years. Mrs. Rucker is a member of

Westwood Church, Meridian, and she has served in many teaching positions for most of the 25 years. She serves now as teacher in the Children's Department. Mrs. Rucker and her husband, Herbert, reside at 812-70th Place, Meridian. W. Buford Usry is pastor of Westwood and Bobby Cooper is Sunday School director.

MRS. ANNIE RUCKER has received a perfect attendance pin in Sunday School for 25 years. Mrs. Rucker is a member of

Thomas W. Goldman, a resident of Clinton, was recently promoted to the position of Associate Dean of the Mississippi College School of Law.

Dean Goldman joined the Mississippi College law faculty in June, 1976, and served as Assistant Dean from 1977 until this year. Prior to his association with the school, he was a teaching fellow at Southern Methodist University for a year, taught at the University of Tulsa College of Law, and practiced law in Meridian as a partner in the firm of Goldman and Goldman.

Goldman received his legal education at the University of Mississippi, where he earned the Juris Doctor degree and at New York University, where he received the Master of Laws degree. He is presently a candidate for the Doctor of the Science of Law degree at Southern Methodist University.

He is married to the former Sandra Snowden of Meridian and they have two sons, Tom, 12, and Michael, 11.

Lester E. Moon is associate pastor of the Ruleville Church, and not pastor of the Mt. Vernon Church, Leflore County, as stated in a homecoming announcement for the Mt. Vernon Church, printed in the Oct. 9 Baptist Record. Mt. Vernon, which celebrated homecoming on Oct. 12, is without a pastor at present.

MRS. MURIEL RIFFEY was honored recently at the Sunflower Church for 25 years of service as a Sunday School



teacher, and service in other capacities, such as W.M.U. director, Sunbeam leader, and CT leader. She was recognized as a dedicated and faithful member. Her Sunday School pupils presented her with a gift and corsage during a morning worship service. — Photo by Tami Parker.

Devotional

Refusing To Accept God's Power

By Howard E. Spell, Dean Emeritus, Mississippi College

2 Timothy 3:5
When giving some instructions to Timothy in his last known letter to him the Apostle Paul reminded him that grievous times would come in which people would hold "a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof" (2 Timothy 3:5 ASV). The word Paul used which is translated "deny" is sometimes used in the sense of negation or denial, but is used more frequently in the New Testament in the sense of refusing to acknowledge or to accept a person or an idea. Thus Paul was likely not telling Timothy that people would say that God or godliness had no power, but rather that they would refuse to accept or use the power God could supply. Their godliness would be mere form without substance.

As Christian people we are quite ready to affirm the omnipotence of God. We are quick to tell others that our God is all-powerful, but the sad fact is that although we go through the outward forms of our religion, we refuse to use the power God has placed at our disposal. We are quite ready to talk of our belief in the power of prayer, but one wonders if our practice does not belie such an affirmation. In all too many cases our prayer life is relegated to public worship in which we bow somewhat reverently while another voices an audible prayer, or we pray only when we recognize we are in serious trouble.

The successful use of almost any kind of power is determined largely by one's knowledge of the laws by which it is governed. People want power, be it social, economic, political, or whatever in order to have it serve them. As a result they may use various ways in order to gain it.

Probably a part of our failure to accept God's power is due to the fact that it does not come to us through manipulation or selfish design. God takes the initiative in this and we must recognize that it is wholly of grace. We do not earn it. We do not deserve it. Furthermore, we should understand that we are to be instruments or conductors through which God can use His power for His glory and man's good. It is a sad fact of life that we do not accept God's power because we refuse to surrender to His will and purpose.

Spell

Uniform Lesson

God's Covenant And Ezra

By Jack Glaze, Chairman,
Division of Religion, MC
FOCAL PASSAGE:
Nehemiah 8:2-3; 9:22-38

Lesson Background: The books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings interpreted the history of Israel in the light of covenant obedience or disobedience. The fall of Samaria (722 B.C.) was explained in terms of the latter (II Kings 17:15, 18), and unfortunately, Judah also "kept not the commands of the Lord their God" (II Kings 17:19). Because of Judah's sin, the historian said that the anger of the Lord came upon the nation (II Kings 24:19-20), and Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians (586 B.C.).

Although God's judgment fell on His people for their covenant disobedience, His mercy prevailed; for He did not revoke His eternal covenant. Babylon continued the deportation policy of Assyria and a remnant of Jewish survivors formed a colony of refugees in Mesopotamia. Jeremiah and Ezekiel predicted a "new exodus" and a "new covenant." God would redeem His people. Jerusalem would be rebuilt (cf. Isa. 44:26). Jeremiah prophesied that the people would return home after an exile of 70 years (Jer. 29:10).

In 539 B.C. Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon (cf. Isa. 45:1-5). Cyrus reversed the repressive policy of deportation. The exiles were given permission to return to their homeland if they desired. In 536 B.C. a group of repatriates under Zerubbabel arrived back in Jerusalem. However, the dreams of glory soon faded in the face of crop failures, local opposition, and international instability. Once again God intervened and sent the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (cf. 520 B.C.). In 516 B.C. the second temple was completed; however, the expected Messianic age still did not materialize. Religious fervor was dissipated and a period of biblical silence fell over the Old Testament (cf. 516-458 B.C.). Then once again, God moved in a redemptive way and called two prominent leaders into His service. Ezra, a priest, and Nehemiah, a civil governor, responded to the critical situation. Born and trained in exile, both men attained stature in the tolerant Persian atmosphere. Deeply disturbed by the lax moral climate and economic destitution of the Palestinian Jews,

God prospered their requests for governmental permission to travel to their ancestral homeland to help in the situation.

Ezra, a scribe and priest, was given authority to regulate Jewish religious affairs. He sought to restore the Law of Moses to its proper place in worship and daily practice. Nehemiah, the devout civil governor, rebuilt the defensive wall of the city and restored its economic stability.

The Lesson Outlined:

I. The Reading of the Law (Neh. 8:1-3). In spite of many obstacles (Neh. 3-6), the wall was rebuilt. Security precautions were taken (Neh. 7:1-3). Then in the seventh month (Neh. 7:13b) the Feast of Booths was celebrated. Unusual preparations were made, and the effect of the prior works of Ezra and Nehemiah was felt: the people requested that "the book of the law of Moses" be read. Assisted by the Levites, the law was read "from the morning until midday." The reading was repeated daily during the week of the Feast. The reading of the law convicted the people of their moral laxness and neglect in keeping the covenant. Conviction of sin and guilt caused the people to weep.

II. The Confession and Appeal for Mercy (Neh. 9:22-35). Approximately three weeks later, following the Feast of Booths, another solemn assembly was held (cf. Neh. 8:2 and 9:1). The people confessed their sins and sought the presence of God in their lives. Ezra reviewed the history of God's mighty acts with the people (9:6-31) and then appealed to God for covenant mercy.

III. The Covenant Renewed and Signed (Neh. 9:38-39). Sin had been confessed; God's righteous judgment had been acknowledged, and the people's servitude was admitted. Then the people renewed the covenant and put their rededication into writing. Human failure had broken the covenant. God had remained faithful and had given the struggling remnant an opportunity to repent and become once again instruments in the divine redemptive process.

The Lesson Applied:

The repatriates had lived in Babylon far from their cherished homeland. The majority had never known temple worship. Only a few of the elders could remember the glory of the elaborate rituals in the days of national independence. Therefore, when difficult

economic conditions faced the struggling community they did not feel the need for a house of worship. Clearly many factors entered into their spiritual decline: pressing personal economic concerns, absence of worship models to follow, spiritual indifference, unrealistic hope for material prosperity, and a neglect of the book of the Law of Moses.

When God's people let personal concerns take priority over spiritual realities, national decline is inevitable. Worship of God, reading of Scripture, and personal integrity are pillars undergirding society. The people who abandon God's directives will do so to their own hurt. Ignorance, neglect, and indifference to God's law are inadequate excuses.

God is sovereign Lord of history. He is long-suffering and patient; however, His judgment is sure. Nevertheless, punishment is redemptive for His chosen, and His mercy reaches out to forgive the penitent. His control over history has been demonstrated: foreign invaders (Assyria and Babylon) served as agents of His punishment on rebellious Israel. A foreign power (Persia) was used to restore and renew the people. If God can turn failure and evil into His redemptive purpose, He is a God who can be trusted!

When the redemptive plan of God seemed destined to failure because of human frailty, God's spirit stirred human concern to action, and faithful men (Ezra and Nehemiah) became instruments in a spiritual renewal. The apparent weakness (man) in God's plan of salvation suddenly became its strength!

Spiritual malnutrition resulted from a famine of God's word. However, God's truth was translated into understandable terms for the people to respond. Aramaic had replaced Hebrew as the language of the people. As Ezra read the Law, Levites circulated among the people interpreting and explaining its meaning. Modern spiritual malnutrition is directly related to biblical illiteracy. Occasional reading of selected portions will not give the spiritual nourishment needed. When Ezra restored God's word to a central place in the life and worship of the people, they received unexpected blessings.

God's word is a dormant power awaiting release.

Life and Work Lesson

Witness To Jesus' Messiahship

By Bobby Perry, Pastor,
First, Moss Point
Luke 3:1-6, 15-17, 21-22

Earlier, Luke had told of the birth of John the Baptist and of Jesus. The purpose of God for each life is declared. We catch a few portraits of the childhood and development of Jesus for His ministry.

Then John the Baptist steps to centerstage and the spotlight turns on him. Later the centerstage will belong to Jesus. All of this timing was by providential arrangement. As one visualizes himself sitting in the audience there is growing excitement as you sense that something wonderful is about to happen.

John's ministry is second only to that of Jesus. For he was an important connecting link between the old order and the new in God's eternal plan. In a very beautiful sense, John was the apex in Old Testament prophecy and the forerunner to God's full revelation in Jesus Christ.

I. The Mission of the Herald

With the sense of a true historian Luke relates the event to current history. And he is the only one of the Gospel writers who does so. He follows the ancient method of dating by locating it in the context of those in places of rule and leadership. Thus he mentions one emperor, one governor, three tetrarchs, and two high priests. In so doing he began with the outer circle and worked inward.

The mention of two high priests, Annas and Caiaphas, seems strange when one remembers that the high priesthood was supposed to have been for life. The record in Luke is correct; for Annas had held the office in A.D. 6-15 and continued to have great influence although Caiaphas, his son-in-law, held the office in A.D. 18-36. Five sons of Annas held the office, four before and one following Caiaphas. Since the time of the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.), the high priesthood had been degraded and corrupted. In turn, Syrian and Roman rulers appointed and deposed high priests at will. Annas and Caiaphas belonged to a long line of corrupt and often brutish high priests. It was in such a time that "the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the desert" (3:21).

The power of faithful preaching to

secure a hearing is shown despite the fact that John had an unpleasant message. He was urging people to repent. He called them "brood of vipers." No flattery for sure! He warned them against trusting in a physical rather than a spiritual descent from Abraham. He announced impending judgment.

John was inspired by Isaiah. His call and sense of ministry were mediated through the words of the great evangelical prophet. John was building a highway for the King. As engineers would construct a level and smooth road, so John did the moral groundwork in order that people might see the salvation of God.

II. The Message He Proclaimed

In this section Luke records a sample of John's preaching, but is careful to note that this was not all that he said (3:18). It is quite evident that the burden of his message had to do with judgment. However, John 1:29 indicates that it also contained the note of mercy and promise.

The prophetic proclamation (3:15) created excitement and expectation in the hearts of John's hearers. This significant question remained: Is this the Christ? Perhaps a second question followed closely. Are messianic hopes again to be dashed to the ground? John quickly allayed their fears and guided their interpretation of His person. He recognized the importance and significance of his preparatory work; but he insisted that his baptism was a water baptism, the only baptism he could administer. He acknowledged that the One coming would be greater, so great that he was unworthy even to loosen the strings of His sandals — the task assigned to the lowest slave in the household. This One who followed was to baptize "with the Holy Spirit and with fire."

Fire is destructive, but is also a cleansing agent. The saturation of one's personality with the Holy Spirit suggested a cleansing and purification. John also pictured the farmer as he separated the chaff from the wheat, the wheat being gathered into the granary and the chaff burned with fire. The Messiah's coming would not mean salvation for all; the good would be separated from the bad. The impeni-

tent would be destroyed; the coming of the kingdom would enact a great separation.

III. The Messiah Is Authenticated

During this time Jesus remained in Nazareth. But one day the news of the Baptist's ministry had reached Nazareth. It was about six months after John had first appeared in the Jordan valley. Jesus had reached the age of 30, the age when a Jewish teacher entered his ministry. So knowing that His time had arrived, Jesus left His carpenter shop to journey southward toward His rendezvous with destiny.

That Jesus was baptized by John is not open to doubt. The church would never have invented this; but the church did have to explain why Jesus submitted to John for baptism, especially in view of the fact that John baptized sinners. Matthew quoted Jesus as saying that his concern was to "fulfill all righteousness" (3:15). Submitting to baptism was not merely an accommodation to John — it was a right thing to do. Jesus thus humbled himself; and, though sinless, He took His place among the sinners from whom He could demand and to whom He would offer righteousness. Through Jesus' baptism, temptation, and descent from Adam, Luke shows Jesus' identification with mankind.

God's acceptance of Jesus' baptism and identification was defined in the descent of the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove. Luke does not indicate that a dove actually was present, but states that the Spirit came as a dove. The undeniable and important fact is that the Spirit came upon Jesus. This does not mean that Jesus had not previously enjoyed the Spirit's presence, but that the Spirit came upon Him in a new way. He was now equipped to inaugurate His public ministry. Still another sign of God's acceptance was evidenced in the voice which said, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

John had completed his mission; his message was complete. His words came alive in Him who is the Word. The friend of the Bridegroom is content to recede into the background as the Bridegroom goes forth to claim his bride.

